

I haue a way to winne their loues againe:  
Bring them before me.

*Bast.* I will seeke them out.

*John.* Nay, but make haste: the better foote before.  
O, let me haue no subiect enemies,  
When aduerse Forreyners affright my Townes  
With dreadfull pompe of stout inuasion.  
Be Mercurie, let feathers to thy heeles,  
And flye (like thought) from them, to me againe.

*Bast.* The spirit of the time shall teach me speed. *Exit.*

*John.* Spoke like a sprightfull Noble Gentleman.

Go after him: for he perhaps shall neede

Some Messenger betwixt me, and the Peeres,

And be thou hee.

*Mef.* With all my heart, my Liege.

*John.* My mother dead?

*Enter Hubert.*

*Hub.* My Lord, they say five Moones were seene to  
Foure fixed, and the fift did whirle about (night:  
The other foure, in wondrous motion.

*John.* Five Moones?

*Hub.* Old men, and Beldames, in the streets  
Do prophesie vpon it dangerously:

Yong *Arthurs* death is common in their mouths,

And when they talke of him, they shake their heads,

And whisper one another in the eare.

And he that speakes, doth gripe the hearers wrist,

Whilst he that heares, makes fearefull action

With wrinkled browes, with wods, with rolling eyes.

I saw a Smith stand with his hammer (thus)

The whilst his Iron did on the Anvile coole,

With open mouth swallowing a Taylors newes,

Who with his Sheeres, and Measure in his hand,

Standing on slippers, which his nimble haste

Had falsely thrust vpon contrary feete,

Told of a many thousand warlike French,

That were embattailed, and rank'd in Kent.

Another leane, vnwash'd Artificer,

Cuts off his tale, and talkes of *Arthurs* death.

*John.* Why seekst thou to possesse me with these feares?

Why vrgeest thou so oft yong *Arthurs* death?

Thy hand hath murder'd him: I had a mighty cause

To wish him dead, but thou hadst none to kill him.

*Hub.* No had (my Lord?) why, did you not prouoke me?

*John.* It is the curse of Kings, to be attended

By slaues, that take their humors for a warrant,

To breake within the bloody house of life,

And on the winking of Authoritie

To vnderstand a Law; to know the meaning

Of dangerous Maiesty, when perchance it frownes

More vpon humor, then aduis'd respect.

*Hub.* Heere is your hand and Seale for what I did.

*John.* Oh, when the last accompt twixt heauen & earth

Is to be made, then shall this hand and Seale

Witnesse against vs to damnation.

How oft the sight of meanes to do ill deeds,

Make deeds ill done? Hadst thou not bene by,

A fellow by the hand of Nature mark'd,

Quoted, and sign'd to do a deede of shame,

This murder had not come into my minde,

But taking note of thy abhor'd Aspect,

Finding thee fit for bloody villanie;

Apt, liable to be employ'd in danger,

I faintly broke with thee of *Arthurs* death;

And thou, to be encredded to a King,

Made it no conscience to destroy a Prince.

*Hub.* My Lord.

*John.* Hadst thou but shooke thy head, or made a pause

When I spake darkely, what I purposed:

Or turn'd an eye of doubt vpon my face;

As bid me tell my tale in expresse words:

Deepe shame had struck me dumbe, made me break off,

And those thy feares, might haue wrought feares in me.

But, thou didst vnderstand me by my signes,

And didst in signes againe parley with mine,

Yea, without stop, didst let thy heart consent,

And consequently, thy rude hand to acte

The deed, which both our tongues held vilde to name.

Out of my sight, and neuer see me more:

My Nobles leaue me, and my State is braued,

Euen at my gates, with ranks of forraigne powres;

Nay, in the body of this fleshly Land,

This kingdom, this Confinde of blood, and breathe

Hofilitie, and ciuill tumult reignes

Betweene my conscience, and my Cofins death.

*Hub.* Arme you against your other enemies:

Ile make a peace betweene your soule, and you.

Yong *Arthur* is aliue: This hand of mine

Iseyer a maiden, and an innocent hand,

Not painted with the Crimson spots of blood,

Within this bosome, neuer entred yet

The dreadfull motion of a murderous thought,

And you haue slander'd Nature in my forme,

Which howeuer rude exteriorly,

Is yet the couer of a fayrer minde,

Then to be butcher of an innocent childe.

*John.* Doth *Arthur* liue? O hast thee to the Peeres,

Throw this report on their incens'd rage,

And make them tame to their obedience.

Forgiue the Comment that my passion made

Vpon thy feature, for my rage was blinde,

And foule imaginarie eyes of blood

Presented thee more hideous then thou art.

Oh, answer not; but to my Closet bring

The angry Lords, with all expedient hast,

I coniure thee but slowly: run more fast. *Exit.*

### Scena Tertia.

*Enter Arthur on the wall.*

*Ar.* The Wall is high, and yet will I leape downe.

Good ground be pittifull, and hurt me not:

There's few or none do know me, if they did,

This Ship-boyes semblance hath disguis'd me quite,

I am afraide, and yet Ile venture it.

If I get downe, and do not breake my limbes,

Ile finde a thousand shifts to get away;

As good to dye, and go; as dye, and stay.

Oh me, my Vnckles spirit is in these stones,

Heauen take my soule, and England keep my bones. *Exit.*

*Enter Pembroke, Salisbury, & Bigot.*

*Sal.* Lords, I will meet him at S. Edmondsbury,

It is our saferie, and we must embrace

This gentle offer of the perillous time.

*Pem.* Who brought that Letter from the Cardinal?

*Sal.* The Count *Meloane*, a Noble Lord of France,

Whose priuate with me of the Dolphines loue,

Is much more generall, then these lines import. *Big.*

*Big.* To morrow morning let vs meete him then.

*Sal.* Or rather then let forward, for 'twill be

Two long dayes iourney (Lords) or ere we meete.

*Enter Bastard.*

*Bast.* Once more to day well met, distemper'd Lords,

The King by me requests your preface fraight.

*Sal.* The king hath dispossest himselfe of vs,

We will not lyne his thin-bestained cloake

With our pure Honors: nor attend the foote

That leaues the print of blood where ere it walkes.

Returne, and tell him so: we know'the worst.

*Bast.* What ere you thinke, good words I thinke

were best.

*Sal.* Our greefes, and not our manners reason now.

*Bast.* But there is little reason in your greefe.

Therefore 'twere reason you had manners now.

*Pem.* Sir, sir, impatience hath his primledge.

*Bast.* 'Tis true, to hurt his master, no mans else.

*Sal.* This is the prison: What is he lyes heere?

*P.* Oh death, made proud with pure & princely beuty,

The earth had not a hole to hide this deede.

*Sal.* Murderer, as hating what himselfe hath done,

Doth lay it open to vrge on reuenge.

*Big.* Or when he doom'd this Beautie to a graue,

Found it too precious Princely, for a graue.

*Sal.* Sir *Richard*, what thinke you? you haue beheld,

Or haue you read, or heard, or could you thinke?

Or do you almost thinke, although you see,

That you do see? Could thought, without this obiect

Forme such another? This is the very top,

The height, the Crest: or Crest vnto the Crest

Of murders Armes: This is the bloodiest shame,

The wildest Savagery, the vildest stroke

That euer wall-ey'd wrath, or staring rage

Presented to the teares of soft remorse.

*Pem.* All murders past, do stand excus'd in this:

And this so sole, and so vnmatcheable,

Shall giue a holinesse, a puritie,

To the yet vnbroken finne of times;

And proue a deadly blood-shed, but a iest,

Exempl'd by this heynous spectacle.

*Bast.* It is a damned, and a bloody worke,

The gracelesse adion of a heauy hand,

If that it be the worke of any hand?

*Sal.* If that it be the worke of any hand?

We had a kinde of light, what would ensue:

It is the shamefull worke of *Huberts* hand,

The practice, and the purpose of the king:

From whose obedience I forbid my soule,

Kneeling before this ruine of sweete life,

And breathing to his breathlesse Excellence

The Incense of a Vow, a holy Vow:

Neuer to taste the pleasures of the world,

Neuer to be infected with delight,

Nor conuersant with Ease, and Idlenesse,

Till I haue fet a glory to this hand,

By giuing it the worship of Reuenge.

*Pem.* *Big.* Our soules religiously confirme thy words.

*Enter Hubert.*

*Hub.* Lords, I am hot with haste, in seeking you,

*Arthur* doth liue; the king hath sent for you.

*Sal.* Oh he is bold, and bluffs not at death,

Auant thou hatefull villain, get thee gone: (the Law?)

*Hub.* I am no villaine, *Sal.* Must I rob

*Bast.* Your sword is bright sir, put it vp againe.

*Sal.* Not till I sheath it in a murderers skin.

*Hub.* Stand backe Lord Salisbury, stand backe I say:

By heauen, I thinke my sword's as sharpe as yours.

I would not haue you (Lord) forget your selfe,

Nor tempt the danger of my true defence;

Least I, by marking of your rage, forget

your Worth, your Greatnesse, and Nobility.

*Big.* Out dunghill: dar'st thou braue a Nobleman?

*Hub.* Not for my life: But yet I dare defend

My innocent life against an Emperor.

*Sal.* Thou art a Murderer.

*Hub.* Do not proue me so:

Yet I am none. Whose tongue so ere speakes false,

Not truly speakes: who speakes not truly, Lies.

*Pem.* Cut him to peeces.

*Bast.* Keepe the peace, I say.

*Sal.* Stand by, or I shall gaul you *Faulconbridge*.

*Bast.* Thou wert better gaul the diuell Salisbury.

If thou but frowne on me, or stirre thy foote,

Or teach thy hastie spleene to do me shame,

Ile strike thee dead. Put vp thy sword betime,

Or Ile so maule you, and your tossing-Iron,

That you shall thinke the diuell is come from hell.

*Big.* What wilt thou do, renowned *Faulconbridge*?

Second a Villaine, and a Murderer?

*Hub.* Lord *Bigot*, I am none.

*Big.* Who kill'd this Prince?

*Hub.* 'Tis not an houre since I left him well:

I honour'd him, I lou'd him, and will weepe

My date of life out, for his sweete liues losse.

*Sal.* Trust not those cunning warers of his eyes,

For villanie is not without such rheume,

And he, long traded in it, makes it seeme

Like Riuers of remorse and innocencie.

Away with me, all you whose soules abhorre

Th'vncleanly fauours of a Slaughter-house,

For I am stifled with this smell of sinne.

*Big.* Away, toward *Burie*, to the Dolphin there.

*P.* There tel the king, he may inquire vs out. *Ex. Lords.*

*Ba.* Here's a good world: knew you of this faire work?

Beyond the infinite and boundlesse reach of mercie,

(If thou didst this deed of death) art y damnd *Hubert*.

*Hub.* Do but heare me sir.

*Bast.* Ha? Ile tell thee what.

Thou'rt damnd as blacke, nay nothing is so blacke,

Thou art more deepe damnd then Prince Lucifer:

There is not yet so vgly a fiend of hell

As thou shalt be, if thou didst kill this childe.

*Hub.* Vpon my soule.

*Bast.* If thou didst but consent

To this most cruell Act: do but dispaire,

And if thou want'st a Cord, the smallest thred

That euer Spider twist'd from her wombe

Will serue to strangle thee: A rush will be a beame

To hang thee on. Or wouldst thou drowne thy selfe,

Put but a little water in a spoone,

And it shall be as all the Ocean,

Enough to stifle such a villaine vp.

I do suspect thee very greuously.

*Hub.* If I in act, consent, or sinne of thought,

Be guiltie of the stealing that sweete breath

Which was embounded in this beaucous clay,

Let hell want paines enough to torture me: